

PRYS (PRICE), ELIS (1512? - 1594) 'Y Doctor Coch' ('The Red Doctor'), of Plas Iolyn

Name: Elis Prys
Pseudonym: Y Doctor Coch, The Red Doctor
Date of birth: 1512?
Date of death: 1594
Spouse: Ellyw Prys (née Pool)
Child: Gaenor Thelwall (née Prys)
Child: Thomas Prys
Parent: Mared ferch Rhys Llwyd
Parent: Robert ap Rhys
Gender: Male
Home: Plas Iolyn
Area of activity: Religion; Public and Social Service, Civil Administration; Eisteddfod
Author: William Rowlands

Second son of **Robert ap Rhys ab Meredydd** of Plas Iolyn, Ysbyty Ifan, Denbighshire. It is said that his grandfather, **Rhys ab Meredydd**, or Rhys Fawr, fought at Bosworth with **Henry VII**. His father, **Robert ap Rhys**, was chaplain to Cardinal Wolsey, and Henry VIII gave him the lands of Dolgynwal and parts of Penllyn, where his son **Cadwaladr** founded the family of **Price** of Rhiwlas (see articles **Price** of Rhiwlas and **Vaughan** of Pant Glas).

He was born at the beginning of the 16th century, and was educated at Cambridge, graduating L.B. in 1533, and D.C.L. in 1534, and from the red gown of his degree he was known as 'Y Doctor Coch' ('The Red Doctor'). He married Ellyw, daughter of Owen Pool of Llandecwyn, Merioneth, by whom he had seven children, two sons and five daughters, **Thomas** being the elder son. In 1535 Thomas Cromwell appointed him one of the visitors of monasteries in Wales, and he took a prominent part in the destruction of the monasteries. In 1538 Cromwell made him a commissary-general of the diocese of St Asaph, and gave him the sinecure rectory of Llangwm, Llandrillo-yn-Rhos, and Llanuwchllyn. In the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth he devoted himself to civil administration; he was three times Member of Parliament for Merioneth; he was sheriff of Merioneth seven times; sheriff of Denbighshire four times; sheriff of Anglesey twice; and once of Caernarvonshire. He was custos rotulorum of Merioneth for the greater part of Elizabeth's reign.

He was also a member of the Council of the Marches, and in 1561 he was made chancellor of Bangor and rector of Llaniestyn; in February 1565 he was suggested for the bishopric of Bangor, but archbishop Parker objected, because Price was neither a priest nor worthy to be a priest. In 1560 he obtained from the Crown the manor of Tir Ifan, with lands at Ysbyty and Penmachno. He was a great friend of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, and when Elizabeth gave the lordship of Denbigh as a gift to the earl in 1564, Price was one of his tenants, and became a tool of oppression in his land. **Thomas Pennant** refers to him as 'a creature of the earl of Leicester and devoted to all his bad designs.' He was a patron of the bards, and his name is the first in the list of esquires in the commission granted by queen Elizabeth to hold the eisteddfod at Caerwys, 1567.

His will was made on 3 August 1590, a codicil added 6 May 1594, and probate granted 24 May 1596. He died 8 October 1594.

Thomas Prys of Plas Iolyn was his son.

Author

William Rowlands

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